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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 002821

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/22/2017

TAGS: PGOV PINS PTER ASEC IZ

SUBJECT: MUTHANNA: SUSPECTS ARRESTED FOR ASSASSINATION OF GOVERNOR, OTHERS SOUGHT

REF: A) BAGHAD 2817 B) BAGHDAD 2783

Classified By: PRT Leader Phil Eggers for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (U) This is a PRT Muthanna Reporting Cable.

¶2. (C) On 22 August Brigadier Khadim Abulheel, Muthanna,s Chief of Police, announced to Muthanna TV that security forces in the province had arrested perpetrators of Governor Hassani,s assassination. In the statement, he did not share the names, or tribal and political affiliations of the suspects.

¶3. (C) The PRT received a separate report that two suspects had been arrested, but that two more remained at large. One detainee is reportedly from the Al-Sohoor, a sub-tribe of Albu Hassan (the tribe of the late Governor). The other is allegedly from the Al-Khezael tribe, which has a strong presence between Rumaytha and Diwaniyah. According to this same source, Col Ali Najim Mutasher, of the Criminal Intelligence Unit, has already managed to obtain useful information from the suspects, including identity of the attack,s mastermind and the source of funding, both of which are reportedly affiliated with JAM. JAM capitalized on a disagreement over a local matter between the Governor and the Al-Sohoor, and managed to convince two members of that tribe to assist them in the attack, according to this same person, who has been reliable in the past. Our source said that the search for the other two suspects continues, with the assistance of security forces in Diwaniyah.

¶4. (C) The Australian forces, who provide overwatch for Muthanna province, have received one separate report that the two men arrested were &neighbors of the Governor.<sup>8</sup> If true, this local complicity would be consistent with the reports of tribal involvement. PRT is working to further clarify details of the arrests, including the number of suspects.

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